

## IN THIS EDITION



Veterans Day to be observed at church. See page 3.



Public Works earns prestigious honor. See page 4.

## TOWN HALL CALENDAR

Nov. 18: Town Council regular meeting (7 p.m.)

Nov. 25: Town Council work session (6 p.m.)

Nov. 27-28: THANKS-GIVING HOLIDAY (Town offices and facilities closed)

Dec. 1: Town Council regular meeting (7 p.m.)

Meetings are in the Council Chambers in building B at Town Hall, 900 Seventh Ave. Town Council regular meetings are recorded and broadcast (not live) on GTV 11 (Time Warner 11, AT&T U-verse 99).



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# GARNER UPDATE

Vol. 71 No. 77

## Hodges to Fill Assistant Town Manager Position

Garner Revitalization Association (GRA) Executive Director John Hodges has been tapped to serve as the Town's new assistant town manager for development services. He will assume his new role on Nov. 10.

The position Hodges will fill is a new one. It was approved in the fiscal year 2014-15 operating budget as part of a reorganization of the Town Manager's Office to better prepare the Town for future growth. Hodges will join Town Manager Hardin Watkins and Assistant Town Manager-Operations Rodney Dickerson as a three-person leadership team to guide the 11 Town departments and facilitate the various Town initiatives outlined in the Town's Strategic Action Plan.

Hodges, an East Carolina University graduate, has served the Garner community since 2007 as GRA executive director. He led the Main Street program, implemented and promoted the Historic Downtown Garner Plan and served the Board of Directors in the organization's efforts to revitalize and improve the heart of the community. Hodges' prior career included corporate sales management of information technology and software solutions for 15 years and operation of a family-owned small business for nine years.

"I believe that John will bring an impressive amount of enthusiasm, ability to get things done and knowledge of the intricacies of the Garner community to our leadership team," Town Manager Watkins said. "Rodney and I are looking forward to having John join our leadership



Garner Revitalization Association Executive Director John Hodges will fill a new role for the Town starting Nov. 10.

team as we tackle an exciting list of major projects and initiatives that will shape Garner for the future."

Hodges' track record while at GRA includes leadership and involvement with some high-profile projects that have been influential in shaping Garner's future: achieving National Main Street Center accreditation; strategizing for the inclusion of multiple downtown improvements in the successful 2013 bond referendum; co-leading the successful 2013 All-America City campaign; acquir-

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Follow the GRA on Twitter (@Downtown-Garner).



## A Message from the Mayor



Watch the mayor's "Great People in Garner" on GTVII (Time Warner 11, AT&T 99) and on demand at [garnernc.gov](http://garnernc.gov) and [youtube.com/townofgarner](http://youtube.com/townofgarner).

As you know, this is the time of year when we take stock of those things for which we're thankful. As mayor of this great All-America



City, I am thankful for many things.

First, I am thankful for the way our town is growing and prospering. You can see that with the new construction taking place on U.S.

70 at White Oak and in other parts of town including in the existing White Oak Crossing shopping center

and along Timber Drive. You can also see signs of robust residential growth at The Village at Aversboro and in other subdivisions.

As mayor, I am also thankful for our town's engaged and civic-minded citizens, such as the ones who just graduated from the fall Garner 101 class. It is these type of exemplary citizens who enabled us to earn our All-America City designation.

In addition, I am thankful for our veterans, whom we will honor on Veterans Day with a fitting observance at Aversboro Road Baptist Church

(see the next page for details).

Finally, as mayor, I am thankful for dedicated Town employees such as the men and women in our Public Works Department, which recently became the first public works department in the state to earn accreditation.

Yes, as mayor of the great Town of Garner, there are many reasons to be thankful. Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!

*Ronnie S. Williams*

Ronnie S. Williams

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## Hodges

Continued from page 1

ing 25 properties in the downtown area for future development; writing complex grant applications; organizing successful downtown promotional events such as concerts and a food truck rodeo; implementing the townwide wayfinding sign program; leading the development of the Historic Downtown Garner Plan and facilitating construction of multiple improvements downtown including sidewalks, signage and a playground.

Hodges has completed continuing education programs at Duke University in non-profit management and the UNC School of Government in leadership strategies for results.

"I have enjoyed my tenure leading the Garner Revitalization Association and working to revitalize Garner's original downtown district to its highest and best economic potential," Hodges said. "I am very proud of the accomplishments we have made, and I am especially proud of the community support for

our mission that has been demonstrated through participation in our events, investments made in the district and support for the Downtown Redevelopment Bonds passed in 2013."

"I am excited about the opportunity to expand my role with the Town and to help the development services departments work cohesively and efficiently to encourage, enable and sustain positive growth for Garner," Hodges added.

### Reorganization Plan

Under the reorganization of the Town Manager's Office, Hodges will be responsible for the Planning, Engineering, Economic Development and Inspections departments and will serve as the liaison to GRA, the Garner Economic Development Corporation and the Garner Chamber of Commerce. He will also be responsible for the Town's construction project management as a function area of the Engineering Department.

Assistant Town Manager-Operations Dickerson will be responsi-

ble for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources, Public Works and Information Technology departments. His areas of responsibility will also include issues pertaining to safety, insurance, risk management, the citizen request tracking system, legislative liaison, the Google Fiber project, economic incentives policy coordination and coordination of all Town Council committees.

Town Manager Watkins will be directly responsible for the Police, Human Resources and Finance departments, as well as the Town Clerk's Office, communications manager, budget and special projects manager and the assistant town managers. His bailiwick also will include Town Council/mayor relations, the budget, internal audit and special projects. He will be liaison to the town attorney, N.C. League of Municipalities and other regional partners of the Town.

One of Hodges' early tasks as assistant town manager will be to work with the GRA leadership to identify and select a new downtown manager to backfill the role he is departing.



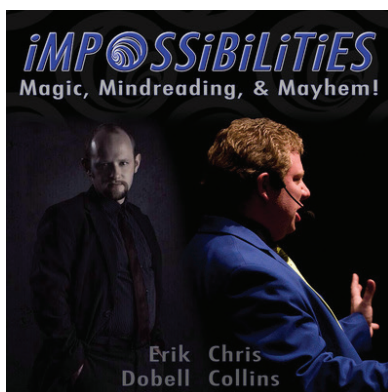


## Magic and Comedy Show Comes to GPAC on Nov. 21

Magical comedian Chris Collins and mentalist Erik Dobell have spent a combined 40-plus years travelling from South Dakota to South Korea entertaining NFL football players and celebrities at private and public events. For their new project, they wondered what would happen if a magician and mind reader worked together as a duo. The result is the show "Impossibilities: An Evening of Magic, Mind Reading and Mayhem," which will be at Garner Performing Arts Center on Friday, Nov. 21 at 7:30 p.m.

"It was Chris's idea originally," Dobell said. "I was hesitant at first, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized it was a great idea [to combine our acts]."

Collins came up with the idea with a specific goal in mind. "What we'll be bringing to the



stage is a show that literally has something for everybody. There's comedy and drama, magic and mind reading, and everything in between. Everyone will walk away with a favorite different part that they can tell their friends and family about," he said.

For ticket information, visit [garnerperformingartscenter.com](http://garnerperformingartscenter.com).

## Entries for Christmas Parade Taken Until Nov. 14

*Parade on Dec. 6;  
Light Up Main Dec. 5*

The Town is now accepting applications for participants for the annual Christmas Parade, which will be held downtown on Saturday, Dec. 6 at 2 p.m. This year's parade theme is "Santa's Got a Brand New Bag." It will celebrate the joy of toys and giving in conjunction with a Toys for Tots drive that will be held at all Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources office locations in the month of November.

For a parade entry application, visit [garnernc.gov](http://garnernc.gov). You can also pick up an application in person at the department's main offices at Town Hall, building B, located at 900 Seventh Ave.

Applications should be returned no later than Friday, Nov. 14 at 5 p.m. either by email to [jmcallister@garnernc.gov](mailto:jmcallister@garnernc.gov), or by mail or in person to:

Town of Garner Christmas Parade  
Attn: Jill McAllister  
900 7th Ave.  
Garner, NC 27529

Applications returned in person should be taken to building B of Town Hall.

The annual **Light Up Main** event, featuring the lighting of the Town tree, will take place on Friday, Dec. 5 with the tree lighting happening at 6 p.m. There will be local entertainment, free activities for the kids and visits with Santa and Mrs. Claus.

For more information, call (919) 661-4602.



Follow PRCR  
on Twitter  
(@GarnerPRCR).

## Veterans Day Observance at Aversboro Road Baptist

The public is invited to join local veterans, their families and civic and community leaders to honor veterans at the 2014 Veterans Day celebration sponsored by the Town of Garner and Garner Veterans Memorial Committee on Tuesday, Nov. 11 at 11 a.m. at Aversboro Road Baptist Church (1600 Aversboro Road).

The Garner Magnet High School Symphonic Band will have a patriotic mini-concert beginning at 10:30 a.m. Other featured guests for this event will be the Avers-



boro Elementary School STEM fourth- and fifth-grade chorus, directed by Kathy Hopkins, as well as guest soloists Dana Stephenson Dixon and Dave Kamphuis.

Maj. Gen. Todd Kelly, Air National Guard assistant to the commander-Air Mobility Command, will be the guest speaker.

Gen. Kelly is a 1981 graduate of N.C. State University and has served in a variety of command positions, including in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.





# Public Works Jumps to Top of Class in NC

The Town of Garner's Public Works Department last month became the first public works department in the state to be accredited by the American Public Works Association and only the 95th in North America.

The department was commended for 12 "model practices"—nine related to grounds work and one each for facilities inventories, strategic plan and customer service (i.e. the Town's garner info app).

The APWA accreditation program recognizes public works agencies that go beyond the requirements of the management practices established nationally in the public works industry, as contained in the APWA Public Works Management Practices Manual.

The Garner Public Works Department began the accreditation process in September 2011, and the department's accreditation on-site evaluation was conducted Sept. 17-19. The department was presented the accreditation plaque with medal at the Nov. 3 Town Council meeting.

"The awarding of the APWA accreditation shows that we have dedicated ourselves to concepts of improvement and in-depth self-assessment of department policies, procedures and practices," Public Works Director Paul Cox said.

Garner's Public Works Department is made up of



The Public Works Department's accreditation team shows off the APWA plaque and medal presented at the Nov. 3 Town Council meeting. The team (from left) consists of Operations Superintendent Kip McClary, Administrative Support Specialist Brenda Baker, Director Paul Cox, Assistant Director Forrest Jones, Services Supervisor Tyson Langdon and Administrative Support Specialist Donna Huff.

several components: Administration, the Streets Unit, Public Grounds Unit, Facility Unit and Fleet Management Unit. For more information, contact the department at (919) 772-7600.



To submit service requests, download our free garner info app by going to [garnernc.gov](http://garnernc.gov).



## Garner 101 Graduates Another Group of Engaged Citizens

The fall 2014 Garner 101 citizens' academy wrapped up with a graduating class of 24 residents being honored at a dinner on Oct. 16. Garner 101 is a free course provided by the Town of Garner. It consists of 10 weekly interactive classes that teach citizens about the inner workings of their

municipal government and the Town's service partners in the community. To learn more about Garner 101 or to enroll in the spring session, contact Neighborhood Improvement Manager Reginald Buie at [rbuie@garnernc.gov](mailto:rbuie@garnernc.gov) or by phone at (919) 773-4446.